MEMPHIS PRESS SCIMITAR, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1977

MID-15 EDITION

King Investigation Findings To Be Released This Week

By KAY PITTMAN BLACK
Press-Scimitar Staff Writer

The U.S. Department of Justice's exhaustive 8-month probe into the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has ended and findings in the investigation are expected to be released this week.

Mike Shaheen of the Justice Department's division of professional responsibility in Washington, D.C., said the report has made its way through channels to the desk of the U.S. Attorney Genera land that the findings and conclusions should be made public "in a couple of days."

A source who has seen a copy of the report, however, indicated that the new investigation launched last May into the slaying of the civil rights leader may have produced few startling revelations.

"I wouldn't stay awake at night anticipating it (the report)," the source said.

The investigation was suggested by Sen. Frank Church's committee and the Attorney General's office in Washington authorized the probe.

Justice Department investigators spent several weeks last summer pouring over records in the files of the Memphis bureau of the Federal Bureau of Investigation as well as those in the Shelby County Attorney General's office and the Shelby County Criminal Court Clerk's office.

Shaheen, 35, came to Memphis personally to get the investigation started. The native of Como, Miss., is a former law clerk of U.S. Dist. Judge Robert M. McRae Jr.

Shaheen said that files in all of the 59 field offices of the FBI were checked because material obtained during the original investigation of the King slaying was in all of the field offices.

King was shot in Memphis on April 4, 1968, and James Earl Ray was arrested after an international manhunt. Ray pleaded guilty on March 10, 1969, to charges of killing King.

A few days later, however, the convicted assassin claimed he was coerced into making the guilty plea by Percy Foreman, his Houston, Tex., attorney.

Judge McRae turned down Ray's bid for a new hearing after an evidentiary hearing and the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court upheld that ruling.

Ray, serving a 99-year sentence, has recently been transferred from the state prison in Nashville to the state's Brushy Mountain prison.